

The irony here is that the very rationale some in the administration cite for regime change in Iraq is an emerging reality in North Korea: A rogue regime and one of the world's worst proliferators is on the verge of becoming a plutonium factory. It will sell anything it develops to the highest bidder.

We know it doesn't take much plutonium to make a nuclear threat real. You only need something the size of the bottom of a water glass, about an eighth of an inch thick, two pieces. With a crude operation to ram it together at high speed, you have a 1 kiloton bomb in a homemade nuclear device.

My colleagues from New York will remember this: our national laboratories produced what could be a homemade nuclear weapon. They made it off the shelf with easily obtainable materials. Everything except the plutonium. I asked Senators CLINTON and SCHUMER to bring that homemade weapon up to S. 407 and they walked it right in.

The threat of proliferation exists in North Korea as we speak, right now, not tomorrow or next week or next month or next year, but right now.

And by the way, if President Clinton had not completed the Agreed Framework, North Korea would already have material for dozens of nuclear weapons.

If North Korea continues down this path, we also risk an arms race in Asia. Think about it. North Korea, South Korea, Japan. And if that happens, China will build up its nuclear weapons arsenal, India will get nervous and do the same, and Pakistan will follow suit. Everything we've been working to present for decades—a nuclear arms race in Asia and beyond—will become a reality. And that could have a terrible impact on economic stability, too.

The regime in Pyongyang is first and foremost to blame for this crisis. But frankly, two years of policy incoherence on our part has not helped matters. We have see-sawed back and forth between engagement and name-calling.

And the last two weeks of taking options off the table—especially talking—has made matters worse. It tied our own hands and added tension to our already strained relationship with a key ally, South Korea. We need a clear—and clear eyed—strategy for dealing with this danger.

I'm pleased the administration now seems to be on the right track. As several of us have argued for weeks, direct talks are the best way out of this impasse.

Some claim that talking is appeasement. Well, we know that not talking could result in North Korea having the material to build up to a half dozen nuclear weapons in six months—and dozens more in the months and years to follow.

We know that taking out North Korea's plutonium program must be a course of very last resort. Pyongyang has more than 10,000 heavily protected

artillery pieces just miles from Seoul—it could devastate the city, its inhabitants and many of our troops before we could respond.

We know that for additional sanctions to bite, we would need the participation of South Korea and China, neither of whom so far, wants to pursue that path.

And we know that talking is not appeasement. It is the most effective way to tell North Korea what it must do if it wants more normal relations with us. In fact, in dealing with an isolated regime and a closed-off leader, talking clearly and directly is critical if we want to avoid miscommunication and miscalculation.

We cannot and should not buy the same carpet twice. We won't if we insist on getting more from North Korea than we got last time. This should include giving up the plutonium and spent fuel it already has produced and forsaking the production of plutonium and uranium in the future—all of this verified by international inspectors and monitoring.

In turn, we should hold out the prospect of a more normal relationship, including energy assistance, food aid and a "no hostility pledge."

IRAQ

As we contend with Korea, we also must deal with Iraq. The administration was mistaken to suggest North Korea could be put on the back burner. But so are those who suggest Iraq is not a major problem. It is, and we must continue to deal with it on its own merits, but on our own timetable.

It's no secret that the State Department, the Defense Department, and the Joint Chiefs of are at odds on the best course of action in Iraq.

We have Hans Blix and the IAEA saying that the inspectors need more time to accomplish their mission—that they will have to stay in Iraq much longer to get the job done.

Secretary Rumsfeld is saying, if we get ourselves locked in for four more months we will lose our weather window and be forced to wait until the fall.

Secretary Powell is saying, look, we must make it a priority to maintain the support of the French and the Germans and everyone else, not to mention the American people. The President was right to make Iraq the world's problem, not just our own. Let's keep it that way.

In my view, the President has shown restraint on Iraq. He has gone to the United Nations. He has allowed inspectors to begin. Now he must allow them to take their course. I would say to the President, keep it going. In the eyes of the world, you're doing it right.

Inspectors are not a permanent solution and neither is our massive troop presence. But so long as the inspectors are doing their work in Iraq, backed up by the threat of our forces, it is highly unlikely Iraq could pursue a nuclear program undetected or would run the risk of selling chemical or biological weapons to terrorists. And we will sus-

tain international support. Meanwhile, the pressure will build on Saddam. Unlike in North Korea, times is on our side, not his.

Of course, this massive deployment is costly and hard on our men and women in uniform. But going to war would be far more costly in terms of troops and treasure. It must remain a last resort.

If we do go to war, we better be absolutely certain that our friends and allies are all in the game at the outset.

Not because we cannot prevail against Saddam Hussein without them. We can—though it certainly makes sense to spread the risk and share the cost. But because without the support of other nations, we will be left with a political, financial, and, potentially, a regionally destabilizing burden after we take down Saddam. We will have to deal with the "day after" Saddam—or more accurately the decade after—on our own.

In the weeks ahead, if we move to war, I hope the President will tell the American people what he has not yet told them: How much will the war cost? How will the balance his guns and butter rhetoric with the bottom-line budget realities we face? How many troops will have to stay in Iraq after Saddam and for how long? How much will it cost to rebuild Iraq? Who will help us foot the bill? The American people deserve answers to these and other key questions?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Kansas has 5 minutes.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I wish to focus the body for a few minutes on January 20, 2003, when we will pause to remember Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a man who changed the course of history and America's conscience.

Dr. King is really one of those few individuals throughout history who has so nobly exemplified the principles of sacrificial love and devotion. He changed a country, and he gave his life in the process.

I want to read a short excerpt from a speech he gave the night before he was assassinated. On April 3, 1968, 1 day before he was killed, Dr. King said the following in a speech:

I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead, but it doesn't matter with me now. I've been to the mountaintop and I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life; longevity has its place, but I am not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And he's allowed me to go up to the mountain, and I have looked over and I have seen the promised land. I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land.

He said that April 3, 1968, the day before he was killed. I want to particularly focus on that last sentence:

... but I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land.

In order for our Nation to reach the promised land Dr. King referenced, we must see a racial understanding, a racial reconciliation. We are still working at it and we still have a ways to go. We need to do it through education, through cooperation, through communication, and we need to do it every way we can.

For several years now, several of us have been working together—I have particularly worked with Congressman JOHN LEWIS on the House side to create a national museum of African-American history and culture on The Mall here in Washington—in our front yard. I am proud to say that I have had the support of many Members of this Chamber on this issue, including Senators SESSIONS, SPECTER, DODD, and CLINTON.

I am confident that when the Presidential commission, which we created, submits their report on the creation of this much needed piece of American history, this body will vote to create this museum—a museum that not only means a great deal to African Americans, but to this whole Nation as well.

I don't pretend that the creation of a museum will be a cure-all for racial reconciliation. It is, however, an important and, I think, a very productive step toward healing our Nation's racial wounds. I hope it can be a museum of reconciliation at the end of the day, and that we will be expanding on Dr. King's philosophy of understanding the plight of one another through education.

As we celebrate the life and legacy of one of our greatest national leaders, we need to return to those basic values which Dr. King promoted. His values are work, family, charity for our fellow man, and, most importantly, the recognition of a higher moral authority, which empowered his life so much.

I had the opportunity last year to meet in Atlanta with Dr. King's wife, Coretta Scott King. She brought up again that point of view that empowered him, which was the power of faith that was evident in all that he did. Only through those qualities he expressed and lived by will we become a nation truly worthy of Dr. King's legacy.

According to Dr. King, I will quote again:

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but at times of challenge and controversy. A true neighbor will risk his position, his prestige, and even his life for the welfare of others. Indeed Dr. King exemplified those qualities in his life, and I invite all of my colleagues to join me in continuing this legacy.

We will be introducing—probably within a month—the bill on the national African American museum. I hope my colleagues will join us in supporting this. I think it is going to be an important statement. We have tried now for some 73 years to get this sort of museum—I have not personally, but a number of groups have. It is time that this happens in order to tell the

difficulties, trials, tribulations, and triumphs of the African-American people. It is my hope that through this understanding we will start to improve and create bonds and a racial reconciliation in our land.

Madam President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATURAL DISASTERS IN NORTH DAKOTA

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I rise to talk about a matter that is of urgent concern to the people I represent in the State of North Dakota, where we have been hit by a series of natural disasters, both drought and flood.

In northeastern North Dakota, we have had nearly a decade of overly wet conditions and, as a result, very severe crop damage, a dramatic loss in production. Ironically, in the other corner of the State, the southwestern corner, we have had the most severe drought since the 1930s. This combination has been a devastating blow to producers in my State, as it has been to producers in Montana, where they have suffered from terrible drought. Right down the core of the country, State after State has experienced overly dry conditions. On the other hand, States to our east have experienced overly wet conditions, with dramatic crop losses, and substantial damage to the economy as a result.

In the last farm bill, we passed in the Senate on a bipartisan basis a disaster relief package. When we went to conference with the House of Representatives, we were told there were two things that could not be negotiated. One was opening up Cuba to trade. The second was disaster assistance. We were told that both had to go to the Speaker of the House. When the Speaker of the House was contacted, he said that the answer on both of those questions—opening up Cuba for trade and disaster assistance—was a firm no.

The administration, in open session in the conference committee, indicated they would not support disaster assistance.

Madam President, we now come to this juncture, and we have another opportunity to respond to the extraordinary natural disasters that have been felt in various parts of the country. And the question is: What do we do? Some have suggested in this legislation an across-the-board cut of 1.6 percent in all domestic programs, and then to take some of that money and give a bonus payment to all farmers, whether they have been hit by natural disaster or not.

As much as I would like to see a bonus payment to all farmers, I really do not think it can be justified before we provide a disaster program for those who have been hit by natural disasters.

The hard reality is that this is something we have always done, whether it was floods in other parts of the country—Missouri—or hurricanes in Florida or earthquakes in California. Every year I have been here, 16 years, we have responded to natural disasters. Last year, for the first time ever, we failed. There was no program to respond to natural disasters.

I do not think we are going to look very good to the American people or very responsive to those who have suffered from natural disasters if our answer is to cut programs across the board and give a bonus to all farmers whether they suffered from natural disaster or not. I just do not think that can be defended. I believe such an approach is going to create very hard feelings, and I do not think it is fair.

The drought we are experiencing in southwestern North Dakota has now crept across the State. We just received the latest information from the U.S. Drought Monitor. It shows that the drought is now covering virtually all of our State and, of course, it shows the terrible and prolonged drought to our west in Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and down into Arizona. This is a drought that is expanding, that is growing, and that is devastating everything in its wake. That has to be responded to, and always before, we have had a program of natural disaster assistance.

Some have said: Just take it out of the farm bill. There are no provisions for disaster assistance in the farm bill. The administration opposed it. It is not there.

Some say it is not fiscally responsible to have a program of natural disaster assistance. We have never taken that position in the whole 16 years I have been here. We have helped every part of the country that suffered from natural disaster. Every year, we have helped those who have been hurt. I do not think we should do any less this year.

The fact is, I wrote the Congressional Budget Office and asked them: What are the savings in the farm bill because of these disasters? They wrote back to me and said: Senator, the savings, because of these natural disasters, are approaching \$6 billion this year. Why? If you have natural disasters, you have less production; less production, higher prices; higher prices, lower farm program payments.

The distinguished occupant of the chair is married to a gentleman with whom I served for many years. Senator Dole, the former Republican leader, represented Kansas in the Senate. He and I worked together many times on disaster assistance in the Agriculture Committee and on the floor of the Senate. Whether it was a problem in Kansas or a problem in North Dakota or a